RIDESHARING | Vancouver's Board of Trade pushes province for Uber | metroNEWS

Vancouver metro

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GOING GREEN

Pharmacies looking into selling medical marijuana. More in metroNEWS

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY JASON LOGAN/METRO

Medical pot rules unconstitutional

FEDERAL COURT

Patients can grow their own, judge rules

Neal Hall
For Metro | Vancouver

A Federal Court judge has struck down the new medical marijuana regulations put in place by the Conservative government in 2013, finding the new rules are unconstitutional.

But Judge Michael Phelan has decided to suspend striking the ruling for six months to allow the federal government to craft new regulations.

The landmark ruling means that the four B.C. plaintiffs in the case, heard in Vancouver last year, will be able to continue growing their own medical marijuana.

The new regulations were brought in by the Conservative government, forcing medical pot users to buy their marijuana from a commercial grower.

Neil Allard of Nanaimo and three other users launched their constitutional challenge two years ago, arguing buying from commercial growers is more expensive and made them choose between their health or their liberty (possible jail time) if they continued growing their own.

The court had previously granted an injunction against the new medical marijuana regulations, which effectively allowing the plaintiffs to continue growing their own until a final ruling in the case.

That injunction will remain in place for the next six months.

In the final ruling, the judge decided the plaintiffs were entitled to a declaration that their Section 7 Charter rights had been violated by the new regulations and was not justified.

During a news conference Wednesday, lead lawyer John Conroy said the four representative plaintiffs were pleased with the ruling.

> **Now I know exactly what I'm getting.**
> Shawn Davey, one of four B.C. plaintiffs

There are 28,000 people across Canada who have Health Canada exemptions to possess and grow pot as medicine.

Since the case began, Conroy said, there are now 40,000 patients in Canada with exemptions from being prosecuted for possessing marijuana, but no new exemptions have been granted for growing medical marijuana since the new regulations were enacted.

One of the plaintiffs in the case, Shawn Davey, 29, stood beside Conroy during the news conference.

"I'm very happy," Davey said.

He said he was hit by a one-tonne truck while riding his motorcycle and suffered a brain injury.

He said he grows about two pounds of marijuana — a strain called Bubba Kush — a month to alleviate his pain and other affects of the accident. He only smokes about 10 per cent of that, he said.

He said the commercially grown pot was too expensive for his low-income budget.

"Now I know exactly what I'm getting," said Davey, who said his hydro bill is up to $500 a month for his homegrown pot.

Conroy noted that the judge found the federal government's two expert witnesses on the risks of fires and safety of pot cultivation — Surrey fire Chief Len Garis and RCMP officer Shane Holmquist — were unreliable and not credible because they were biased against pot growers.

He said the ruling found the government's move to ban medical pot users from growing their own pot "was arbitrary and overbroad in going too far."

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Cadbury's Caramilk bars not chocolate, says edit from defence department network. **Canada**

Bike share will not compete with rental shops, says CEO

URBAN PLANNING

CycleHop will roll out 1,500 bicycles by the end of summer

Thandi Fletcher
Metro | Vancouver

The CEO of a company chosen to launch a new bike-share program in Vancouver this summer says he doesn't want to steal business away from the city's existing bike-rental shops.

"We don't want to compete with the local bike rental shops, and we don't want to undercut their pricing," Josh Squire, founder and CEO of CycleHop, told reporters Wednesday.

"We're looking at the average price that's out there today and we're going to make sure we're competitive with that and not under that."

Squire made his comments Wednesday at a news conference where media were given a demonstration of the company's "smart bikes," a day after the city of Vancouver announced it had signed a five-year, $5-million deal with CycleHop to provide the public bike-share service.

Josh Squire, CEO of CycleHop, demonstrates one of CycleHop's "smart bikes" at a news conference at Vancouver City Hall. **Inset:** Squire shows reporters how to unlock one of the company's "smart bikes" from a docking station with a membership card. THANDI FLETCHER/METRO

The company plans on rolling out 1,500 bicycles parked at 150 stations throughout the downtown core by the end of summer, with a target launch date of June 15.

While the company hasn't yet determined the pricing structure for Vancouver's bike-share program, Squire said membership in other cities costs "roughly" $20 per month, which gives users unlimited 30-minute rides for a month. In Ottawa, the company charges $2.50 for a half hour or $15 a month.

> **We're looking at the average price that's out there today and we're going to make sure we're competitive with that and not under that.** Josh Squire

Jerry Dobrovolny, the city's general manager of engineering services, said that pricing structure, which is cheaper for shorter rides, would likely protect bike rental shops by appealing more to locals looking to get from point A to point B quickly, rather than tourists seeking a longer, scenic ride.

He said the city is also looking at placing bike-share docking stations "a third or half a block away" from bike rental shops.

"We want to avoid unnecessary competition, so we won't be looking at installing bike rental station right in front of a bike rental place," he said. "We'll look at providing some separation."

But Charles Gauthier, president of the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association, questioned whether a third or half a block separation is sufficient.

Although he is supportive of the bike-share program, Gauthier said he wondered if the city could do more to support bike rental shops.

"I think we need to see if it needs to be a much larger buffer zone," he said.

Gauthier suggested that CycleHop and the city could look into incorporating signage at the bicycle docking stations to alert customers about the price differences between bike share and bike rental.

"It's no different from any kind of consumer alert that you might see, maybe with a price differential and what the bike share offers versus what the bike rental shops offer," he said. "I think it's about educating the consumer."

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MEDICAL MARIJUANA

London Drugs could be selling you pot, should it be legalized

Thandi Fletcher
Metro | Vancouver

Medical marijuana users may soon be able to pick up some pot along with other prescription pills, at least if two of Canada's largest drugstore chains have their way.

Richmond-based London Drugs says the company is exploring the possibility of selling medical marijuana in its 79 stores in B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, should the federal government legalize it.

"London Drugs is not doing anything with medical marijuana today, but we anticipate that most likely the legislation will change to enable medical marijuana to be more accessible," John Tse, vice-president of pharmacy for London Drugs, told Metro. "Should the legislation change, we're going to prepare ourselves to be ready for that."

London Drugs, which has a location on West Georgia and Granville in Vancouver, confirmed Wednesday that it is exploring the possibility of selling medical marijuana. COURTESY LONDON DRUGS

The drugstore made its comments Wednesday after the Globe and Mail, citing unnamed sources, reported that competitor Shoppers Drug Mart has held meetings with medical marijuana producers and suppliers over the past year about the idea of selling legal pot through its pharmacies.

Shoppers Drug Mart would not confirm if it has met with medical marijuana producers. But in a statement Wednesday, the company said it believes pharmacies are best equipped to dispense medical marijuana.

If and when marijuana is legalized, Tse agreed it makes sense for pharmacists to dispense medical pot given their expertise in prescription drug management.

> **Should the legislation change, we're going to prepare ourselves to be ready for that.**
>
> John Tse, VP of pharmacy for London Drugs

As experts in drug interactions, he said pharmacists could help determine if a patient who is taking other prescription medications could face any possible negative side effects if they also use medical marijuana.

Since drug stores already operate in a highly regulated environment, Tse said being able to dispense medical marijuana could also yield information about its use to help guide future regulatory changes.

But Tse acknowledged that there are still many problems to weed out first, from training pharmacists on how to dispense medical marijuana to finding more medical literature about the effects of pot.

RIGHTS

Man argues for official languages only in council

Andreas Kargut lives in a 54-unit townhouse complex in Richmond, where he served on various council positions between 2005 and 2014.

Kargut says he and six other residents filed a complaint with the B.C. Human Rights Tribunal in December because they couldn't participate in a Mandarin-only meeting that lasted 90 minutes.

He says he was vice-president during his last year on the council but was ousted by a group that wanted to conduct meetings in Chinese.

He says he wants the law changed to prohibit the use of unofficial languages.

Kargut says the council has now decided to conduct future meetings in English, but he wants compensation.

Kargut says his rights were violated and he will push the province to change the law on how councils conduct business.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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A homeless camp at Vancouver's Oppenheimer Park in September 2014. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO FILE

Pivot lawyer at UN

WORLD COMMITTEE

Makes case against high housing costs, homelessness

Matt Kieltyka
Metro | Vancouver

A United Nations committee on economic, social and cultural rights has heard about Vancouver's homelessness and affordability crisis as it investigates Canada's housing obligations.

Pivot Legal Society lawyer DJ Larkin is in Geneva, Switzerland, this week along with dozens of other non-government organizations to make submissions on the right to housing, which Canada committed to by signing the UN's Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

The committee periodically reviews nations' progress in fulfilling their obligations (the last review of Canada was 10 years ago) and is able to make recommendations.

"We thought that participating in this review was particularly important because the housing and homelessness crisis in Canada is growing and it really is at the point where it really is a national emergency," Larkin told Metro.

"This committee noted that the housing crisis in Canada was an emergency a decade ago and asked them to take immediate steps to rectify the situation and that hasn't happened. Instead, what we're seeing is the increase in use of bylaws and law enforcement to displace people who are found in the streets because of the increase of visible homelessness in Canada."

Larkin cited recent tent cities in Victoria and Abbotsford, where municipal bylaws have been successfully challenged in court to prevent the displacement of homeless people.

She cited reports that show homeless people in British Columbia have half the life expectancy of the general population, and that hundreds of people have died on the street in recent years.

> **Our submissions are both national and quite local.**
> DJ Larkin

She also made submissions on how Vancouver's affordability crisis is putting even more people at risk of homelessness.

"Our submissions are both national and quite local. When we talk about the Vancouver perspective, there are deep concerns of housing affordability," said Larkin.

"Housing affordability is becoming out of reach for many people. The percentage of people who are paying more than 30 per cent of their income on rent is increasing. We have a disturbing percentage of people who are paying more than 50 per cent of their income on rent, and even people who are paying more than 80 per cent.

"This puts us in the situation where we have a lot of people at risk of being homeless."

DJ Larkin COURTESY PIVOT

Conservatively, Larkin said, there are an estimated 250,000 people who experience homelessness in any given year in Canada, and another 50,000 estimated "hidden homeless" (those couch surfing or squatting in buildings).

The new Liberal federal government has indicated it will invest heavily into affordable housing, which Larkin says has encouraged organizations to participate in this UN process.

Larkin said she expects the committee to make its recommendations within a month.

RIDE-SHARING

B.C. in need of Uber, board of trade says

The Vancouver Board of Trade has asked the province to clear the way for Uber and other ride-sharing services.

According to a report released Wednesday by the board of trade, the Vancouver area has the lowest number of taxis per capita of any major Canadian city and some of the highest fares, but is also the largest metropolitan area in North America that doesn't permit commercial ride-sharing services, such as Uber and Lyft, from operating.

"High fare prices, poor customer service and long wait times have led to the growing public demand for new passenger transportation alternatives," the report reads. "Greater Vancouver is in desperate need of new and innovating passenger transportation options."

While the report acknowledges the stiffer regulations placed on the taxi industry and various issues surrounding ride-sharing, it says the taxi industry's stranglehold on licences has stifled competition and left the region underserved.

The board of trade has made several recommendations, the least of which is for the provincial government to impose a regulatory framework that allows for commercial ride-sharing in British Columbia.

It also wants taxi regulations to be updated so the industry can compete with ride-share providers, ICBC to create insurance options suitable for part-time and flexible vehicle-for-hire work and for municipal bylaws to be harmonized with any provincial framework that is developed.

> **Greater Vancouver is in desperate need of ... options.**
> Board of trade report

In October, the City of Vancouver voted in opposition to ride-sharing, but urged the province to look into the issue.

The report notes that municipal governments in Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody and Langley Township have expressed support for ride-sharing in their communities.

MATT KIELTYKA/METRO
WITH FILES FROM EMILY JACKSON

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Dating fraud exposed

CRIME

More than $80,000 stolen from several older gay men

Sanam Islam
Metro | Edmonton

It is alleged that Mourad Aytour and Saed Teeti of Calgary memorized their victims' PIN when they purchased movie tickets. KEVIN TUONG/FOR METRO

Mourad Aytour CONTRIBUTED

Saed Teeti CONTRIBUTED

The pair were taking older men they met online out for what sounded like the perfect first date: a movie first and then an intimate evening at home.

But as Edmonton police said Wednesday, these dates were far from perfect for the unwitting victims. Instead they were frauds that led to an estimated $80,000 stolen from older gay men in Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver.

Mourad Aytour, 42, and Saed Teeti, 36 — both from Calgary — were arrested on Feb. 18 by the Edmonton Police Service's cybercrime unit, along with members of the Calgary police, in two separate southwest Calgary residences.

The duo faces eight counts each of fraud and theft.

Police said the two men would memorize their dates' debit or credit PIN as they purchased movie tickets.

They would then observe the codes a second time after asking their companions to refund the tickets. Later in the evening, they would allegedly steal their victims' cards from their wallet and disappear.

"In January 2016, the Edmonton police was approached by a male complainant who believed he was defrauded $1,000 after he met with the accused through an online dating website that is frequented by older gay males," said Const. Chris Liew of the cybercrimes unit.

She said further investigation with Calgary and Vancouver police led to the discovery there were similar complainants, all aged 55 and up, who'd met Aytour and Teeti on dating websites.

In Edmonton, four men were defrauded of about $42,000 in total. Four Calgary complainants lost about $20,000, while another six to eight complainants in Vancouver also had about $20,000 stolen.

Liew said she expects there could be up to 20 more victims in Alberta and B.C., and is encouraging them to come forward to the police, despite the fact that some victims may be following a "discreet lifestyle" they keep from their families.

"One of the reasons why we believe the accused targeted this demographic is because they believed the complainants would be less willing to come forward with the information once they found out they'd been defrauded," Liew said.

TACTICS

One of the aliases the accused allegedly used was "Romario," according to Const. Chris Liew.

It is also alleged that the accused would take victims out for a coffee to observe PIN codes, and in one case, used the date-rape drug GHB.

CARAMILK

Defence staffer clarifies candy

Someone in the Department of National Defence (DND) is a real stickler when it comes to sweets.

A Wikipedia page for the Cadbury Caramilk bar was anonymously edited by a computer with a DND Internet Protocol address, according to the Twitter handle Government of Canada Edits. The edit corrected the erroneous information that the confection is a chocolate bar.

ISTOCK

On the Cadbury Caramilk page, the word "chocolate bar" was changed to "candy bar," and "chocolate exterior" was clarified to reflect that it is merely "chocolate flavoured."

The account @gccaedits automatically tweets whenever somebody edits a Wikipedia page from a list of known Canadian government IP addresses.

"The Caramilk bar does not meet the legal definition of a chocolate bar in Canada due to the use of vegetable oils in production," wrote the anonymous DND editor in a note about the revision.

"This probably extends to the U.S. as well, where it would have to be labelled as chocolatey or 'made with chocolate.' Edited the description to reflect 'candy bar,' instead of chocolate bar, rather than describe the difference."

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), which oversees food labelling rules, is very particular about what can and can't be called "chocolate."

Division 4 of the Food and Drug Regulations specifies that chocolate shall be made only with cocoa butter.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

POLITICS

Conservative pushes for proportional representation

The Conservatives' former national campaign director is helping to spearhead a push to bring proportional representation (PR) to Canada — despite his own party's apparent aversion to changing the current first-past-the-post electoral system.

Guy Giorno acknowledged that some Conservatives fear proportional representation would disadvantage their party and that it would be crazy to support it.

But he said it doesn't really matter whether it's good or bad for parties or politicians.

"The blunt answer is that I and other individuals and organizations are supporting this because it's right for Canadians, not because it favours or disfavours particular politicians," Giorno said in an interview.

> **It's right for Canadians.**
> Guy Giorno

"What other argument is there? Why would one object to making our elections fairer, more democratic, more representative just because they don't work for the politicians?"

While such a dramatic change in the electoral system would require the Conservatives and other parties to adjust their strategies and modes of campaigning, Giorno predicted they'd all eventually adapt.

Giorno, who also served as chief of staff to former prime minister Stephen Harper, said he's been a longtime advocate of PR.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Nations on migrant route overwhelmed

IMMIGRATION

Tensions rise as EU countries asked to share refugee burden

Overwhelmed by a wave of refugees and what they call indecision in the European Union, Austria and its southern neighbours along the Balkan migrant route agreed to tighter border controls at a meeting Wednesday — and warned that sooner or later they will have to shut their doors entirely.

Greece, the first point of landing for most of the migrants arriving by boat from Turkey, was not invited to the meeting and responded angrily by threatening to block decisions at a forthcoming EU migration summit if sharing of the refugee burden is not made obligatory for member states.

The EU has set up a scheme to share 160,000 migrants arriving in Greece and Italy. Even that would be only a fraction of the total numbers, but so far, barely 600 people have been relocated, and only some EU partners have offered places for them — fewer than 5,000 spots in all.

Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras said that from now on Greece "will not assent to agreements" unless all its partners in the EU are forced to participate proportionately in the relocation and resettlement of refugees. A senior government official, who spoke on customary condition of anonymity, clarified that Tsipras was specifically referring to a March 7 summit on immigration.

Tsipras lashed out at EU member states that "not only erect fences on their borders but at the same time do not accept to take in a single refugee."

Austria has recently capped the number of asylum-seekers it will accept daily at its borders to 80, and limited the number of refugees it will let pass through the country. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

An Afghan woman holding her son reacts as they arrive with other refugees and migrants from the Turkish coast to Mytilene, Lesbos island, Greece. MANU BRABO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CALAIS

Mass evictions ordered
The clock is ticking for hundreds of migrants in the city of Calais waiting for a judge to decide whether to postpone an eviction order. The court ruling on the question says that the decision could come on Thursday, two days after the deadline expired for the state-ordered mass evictions. Authorities say the order concerns 800 to 1,000 migrants.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

REPUBLICAN RACE

Trump's campaign builds momentum

Donald Trump's campaign for the Republican presidential nomination is building a momentum that may sweep away challenges by Florida Sen. Marco Rubio and Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, with his crushing win in the Nevada caucuses marking a third straight victory in state contests.

Donald Trump THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rubio captured second place with fewer than 2,000 more votes than Cruz as final vote totals were reported Wednesday morning.

Trump, the billionaire New York businessman, now can claim victories in the West, the South and Northeast — a testament to his broad appeal among voters frustrated with the political establishment. His rivals are running out of time to stop him.

On Wednesday, Trump won his first endorsements from sitting members of Congress, with Reps. Duncan Hunter of California and Chris Collins of New York announcing they are backing him for the Republican presidential nomination.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

GERMANY

Trio convicted of theft
Two men were convicted of theft and given suspended sentences in the first trials for New Year's Eve crimes in the German city of Cologne. A third suspect was convicted under juvenile law and put on probation.

The spate of thefts and assaults on women near Cologne's main station, blamed largely on foreigners, caused public uproar as Germany faces a huge influx of migrants. More than 1,000 criminal complaints were filed, more than 400 of those alleging sexual crimes.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Express yourself

Facebook's emoji update covers your 'likes,' 'loves' and every emotion in between

It was bound to happen. The trusted "Like" thumbs-up is no longer cutting it. After testing five new reactions with Facebook users in Ireland, Spain, Chile, Portugal, the Philippines and Japan for, well, their reactions, Facebook is now rolling out the expanded emotions globally.

The social-media network chose to offer more nuanced reactions — "love," "haha," "wow," "sad" and "angry" — alongside "like" — to give users "greater control over their expressivity," says Julie Zhuo, Facebook's product design director.

Facebook went through comments on friends' posts, as well as emoji-like stickers people were using. It chose the most common ones and tested those. They considered dozens of reactions — but offering them all would have been confusing. Think of having to flip through pages and pages of emojis: Do you want one wink, a tear, a full frown or a half frown?

Facebook ultimately chose these six reactions for their universal appeal — something that could be understood around the world. Even a generic happy face "was a little bit ambiguous and harder for people to understand," Zhuo says.

Each reaction comes with an animated emoji, such as the thumbs-up for "like" and a heart for "love." These emojis will look the same around the world, but phrases such as "love" will be translated.

Torstar News Service tested out a few run-of-the-mill Facebook posts and how reactions can evolve.

1 Sad

The situation: Your friend says his beloved cat has died.

Old school: It would be strange to "Like" that post. You want to offer your support, but a comment is the only means to do so. You should text him, too, by the way.

New school: Click the "Sad" icon and add a comment with your condolences if you were particularly close with the departed. You should still text your friend, by the way.

2 Wow

The situation: Your sibling posts some adorable photo of your niece's birthday.

Old school: You "Like" the post, but deep inside you know it's an inadequate reflection of your joy. Man, she is so cute.

New school: Click the celebratory "wow" icon (as in, "Wow, she is so cute!") and take solace in knowing that Facebook really nailed it this time. The "Love" emoji would also be appropriate here.

3 Anger

The situation: A friend delivers an award-winning rant about a terrible public transit commute (I mean, two short turns while packed in like sardines is pretty bad).

Old school: Show your solidarity with a comment relaying that no one deserves that cruel start to the day.

New school: Use the "Angry" emoji to succinctly convey all your rage with one squished-up red, angry face. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE AND THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Beijing overtakes N.Y.C. as home to most billionaires

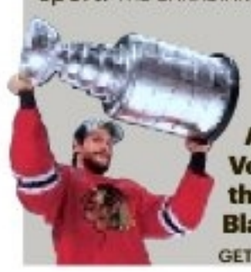
Move over, New York City: Beijing is the new "Billionaire Capital of the World." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Farmers call for more seasonal workers

Agriculture groups want the federal government to allow more producers to hire foreign seasonal employees to work on farms. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Rogers could take hit from looming playoff drought for Canada's teams

For the first time in more than 40 years, the Stanley Cup playoffs may lack a Canadian team this season. Rogers Media's coffers could suffer at the hands of the teams' lacklustre performances three years after the company invested in the sport. THE CANADIAN PRESS



Antoine Vermette of the Chicago Blackhawks. GETTY IMAGES

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Find funds for last minute RRSP

FINANCES

Experts say take advantage of the tax break

Michelle Williams

The RRSP deadline is just days away — falling on Feb. 29 this year. If, like many people, you haven't saved for it, you might be considering the potential tax saving and wondering if you can still take advantage.

There are ways to make a registered retirement savings plan contribution without having the cash on hand. The simplest way is to take out a loan.

Saving by borrowing isn't as strange as it sounds if you do it right.

"If you take out a $5,000 loan, for example, pay back as much you can when you get your refund and then commit to paying off the rest before the end of the year," advises Philip Goldband, chartered professional accountant with G & G Partnership. "It is better to contribute savings throughout the year, but the next option would be to pay back a low-interest loan."

If you're considering this, be sure to shop around for the best loan.

"Some RRSP loan vehicles are certainly better than others," says Jason Pereira, senior financial consultant at Woodgate Financial. "Look for one with a low interest rate and no interest for the first few months through a major bank or investment firm. They're easy to get — applications can be done online and approvals come in right away."

Another way to borrow is to set up a home equity line of credit. "Borrowing against the equity you have in your home is the most affordable and flexible borrowing account you will find," says Pereira.

If all this borrowing sounds counterproductive, just remember that you're getting tax savings from the government that will help pay it back.

"The government is giving you a chance to pay them less money, but only if you save for yourself," explains Pereira. In a nutshell, it's better to owe the bank and have savings than owe the government and not have savings.

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metro VIEWS
Your essential daily news
Thursday, February 25, 2016

CHANTAL HÉBERT: ON THE QUEST FOR AN OPPOSITION LEADER

There are no fewer than eight and as many as a dozen Conservatives testing the federal leadership waters.... History suggests that the more crowded the field, the greater the odds that a dark horse will emerge as the unlikely winner.

Depending on the day of the week, there are no fewer than eight and as many as a dozen Conservatives testing the federal leadership waters.

Should they all enter the race to succeed Stephen Harper, this could make next year's Conservative leadership vote the most unpredictable federal contest in a decade.

Past history suggests that the more crowded the field, the greater the odds that a dark horse will emerge as the unlikely winner.

There were eight candidates on the ballot when Stéphane Dion won the Liberal leadership in 2006. Another four had withdrawn prior to the vote.

Over on the Conservative side, Joe Clark beat 10 rivals for the Tory leadership in 1976.

Neither contest featured a consensual front-runner. Nor, at this early stage, does the campaign to succeed Harper. In contrast with the last Liberal leadership campaign, there is no heir-apparent to the Conservative throne.

But there are crown princes in the wings.

Two of the leading candidates, whose names are circulating, have the potential — should they both run — to turn the campaign into a succession battle between the Tory and the Reform branches of the Conservative family.

The first is Peter MacKay, the former leader of the Progressive Conservative party. Based on a January poll, he is the popular choice of Conservative sympathizers, with support spread pretty evenly across the country.

But it is far from certain he wants the job, at least at this juncture. MacKay retired from politics to spend more time with his young family a few months before the election. He has just joined a Toronto law firm. He could decide to take a pass on this campaign, thinking there will be another opportunity to run later on.

It is a rare federal party that does not earn a second mandate in government. At a minimum, the Conservatives could be looking at almost a decade in opposition. Over a similar period of time, the Liberals disposed of two leaders before Justin Trudeau led them back to office.

Former defence minister Jason Kenney is also said to be mulling his options. His polling numbers are not as impressive as MacKay's, especially in Central Canada, but those results underestimate his actual strength among the Conservatives members who will vote in the leadership election.

As the top social conservative in the last cabinet, Kenney has strong connections to the religious right. And his ethnic outreach on behalf of the party has allowed him to build networks within many cultural communities. But while the Conservative party may be ready to elect a social conservative as its leader, the country may not be so disposed.

The second tier consists of a gaggle of former federal ministers, none of whom could be described as a national household name. Of course, that was also true of Harper when he became leader and he still beat Paul Martin, albeit only on his second attempt.

Doug Ford — of Toronto municipal fame — and businessman/TV personality Kevin O'Leary complete the list. Neither speaks French fluently nor has any federal experience. Both enjoy as much or more name recognition than most outgoing Harper ministers.

But if that were a major asset, former hockey star Ken Dryden would not have finished a distant runner-up in the 2006 Liberal leadership campaign. He used to top the notoriety charts.

Most of the would-be leadership candidates will be working the corridors of this weekend's Manning Centre Conference in Ottawa, making it a warm-up session for a marathon race that will stretch well into the first half of next year.

Former ministers Tony Clement and Maxime Bernier, MP Michael Chong and O'Leary will all be hosting so-called meet-and-greet sessions. Kenney, Lisa Raitt and Kelly Leitch are among the former cabinet members expected at the conference. So are ex-MPs Brian Jean and Patrick Brown, who lead the official opposition in Edmonton and at Queen's Park, respectively. By any other name, this could be a class reunion for Harper alumni.

The state of Canada's conservative movement is the overriding theme of the conference. The fact that this year's gathering of the clans that make up the Canadian right is bringing together a record number of people who toil in provincial and federal opposition tells that story.

Chantal Hébert is a national affairs writer. Her column appears in Metro every Thursday.

THE MICROTREND: Cereal's serious decline

You would think millennials would have a bit of nostalgia for the cereals they slurped while watching Saturday morning cartoons, but they're ditching this beloved "part of a complete breakfast." Grains and milk have gotten a bad rap with some, but cereal's slide is society-wide: U.S. sales have fallen 30 per cent in the past 15 years. Instead, protein is popular: Think breakfast sandwiches and Greek yogurt. While half of Baby Boomers told research firm Mintel they were still regularly waking up to their favourite cereals from childhood, millennials tend to eat cereal as a snack, if at all. Many are skipping the most important meal of the day entirely. But those who do nosh in the morning complain cereal is not good on the go, and — as 40 per cent of Gen Y respondents complained — it requires a bowl you have to wash. SOURCE: THE WASHINGTON POST

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD

metroview

Science says what all pet people know: Animals have empathy

Growing up, our first dog, Murphy (a.k.a. Murphy Brown) had her own seat on the couch.

Most friends didn't mind if, while they were sitting in the far left corner watching Saved by the Bell and shovelling down Kraft Dinner, Murphy happened to plod along to the edge of the cushion and look up expectantly, like "Time to hit the road."

"Oh, that's Murphy's seat!" I'd say, and motion for them to relocate to the wooden rocking chair (don't scoff — it had cushions).

A few friends did mind, but I chocked it up to their ignorance. They didn't understand that Murphy was like us humans.

For decades, maybe forever, we pet owners have — irrespective of science — believed in the human qualities of our pets.

Their ability to feel joy and pain, to relate to our emotions, to comfort us by licking our tears, to love us and feel guilty for eating the garbage.

These days, we should be feeling pretty vindicated.

In two recent compendiums of the latest research, New York magazine suggested "Maybe it's time to take animal feeling seriously," while The Atlantic extolled the empathy displayed by "consoling voles."

"It seems illogical for us to think that animals might not be having a conscious mental experience of play, sleep, fear or love," scientist Carl Safina said in an interview last summer after the publication of his book Beyond Words: What Animals Think and Feel sparked debate. "It is incredible to me there is still a debate over whether animals are conscious and even a debate over whether human beings can know animals are conscious."

No, the scientific community isn't wandering around with purse pooches, telling their friends that fluffy-but-frightening Gigi has the best taste in shoes. But neither is there a blanket scientific aversion to acknowledging the human-like traits of non-humans.

Take the case of voles, mouse-like creatures who, during a recent study, sought to comfort their loved ones when they got electric shocks. It's worth looking up just for the photo of one vole putting its little paw on the back of this other, curled-up vole, who's looking rather downcast. "All will be well," the first vole is saying.

This, coming from a lowly vole, who can't even claim the human-likeness of a gorilla, the social complexity of an elephant, the intelligence of a dolphin or even of a crow.

Yet here they are, according to science: just little brown puffs of love. Or empathy, or something at least that looks like human empathy.

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Your essential daily news

Adele triumphs at the Brit Awards, winning four trophies

Walk a mile in Roldan's boots

FASHION

International model talks diversity, pay gap and regrets

Nichole Jankowski
Metro | Canada

The fashion industry is famous for being fickle, lambasted for its impossible standards of beauty, and oft criticized for its lack of diversity. And so it's notable that Paolo Roldan — born in Quezon City, Philippines, who moved to Canada as a kid, and worked building circuit boards with his brother at a factory in Mississauga when he was young — was discovered not once, but three times.

The first time was in 2005 by renown modelling agent Elmer Olsen. "I was on my way into Hazelton Lanes on a Sunday," recalls Olsen in conversation with Metro. Roldan was working at popular Toronto boutique TNT at the time. "I walked in and saw him and went 'wow.'"

Olsen was quick to sign the 6'2" former basketball player.

"I never really took it seriously," admits Roldan, who was focused on his job. He remembers Olsen calling him for castings. "Sometimes I wouldn't even go."

In 2009, Roldan was in New York on a buying trip for the menswear boutique Nomad when David Bosman, founder of Boss Models, spotted him.

The third time came on the last day of his Fall Winter 2010 go-sees: Riccardo Tisci, creative director of Givenchy, personally cast him to walk exclusively for the house that season.

Sitting in a café on Toronto's Ossington strip, just a week after closing Todd Snyder's FW16 show, Roldan, 38, is recalling those early days. Asked if he's had any regrets, one came to mind.

"I don't want to say I wish I never did it," says the soft-spoken Roldan, referring to a nude shot by Mert Alas and Marcus Piggott that ran in French Vogue and cemented his status in the rapidly expanding men's fashion industry.

> **People love it because I represent them.**
> @juanpaoloroldan

With each passing season it seems another men's week is added to the calendar: Florence, Paris, London and New York — even Toronto has TOM, running this week through March 1.

The hectic show schedule keeps Roldan busy, but during his downtime he's been working on his own designs. Roldan hints at a capsule collection.

"I can't say now because I don't like jinxing myself," says the business-minded Roldan, who sees the industry perhaps all the more clearly because he understands the dollars and cents of it. This clarity extends to the ramped up show schedule (globally, sales of menswear have had double-digit growth for more than five years), diversity on the runway, and a pay gap that sees even mid-level female models earning an average of 148 per cent more than men.

"There's more buying power on the women's side," says Roldan, matter-of-factly. "I tell this to all the young guys — it's because the women buy more."

And when it comes to diversity, he views the industry's moves towards inclusiveness as little more than designers trying to expand their consumer base.

"For the most part it's business, and it's cool because it puts me to work," says Roldan.

Despite all his international success, Roldan is happy to call Toronto home. "All my family is here," says Roldan without hesitation. As our interview wraps, he asks when the article will be published — so his mom can pick up a copy.

HOW TO WET SHINE BOOTS

Vogue.com recently named Roldan their latest street style obsession, noting that "his boots are a particular point of fixation" for fans. To keep his boots looking their best, Roldan uses a wet (or spit) shine technique, which he shares here with Metro readers.

Directions

1. Clean off dirt using a boot brush. Wipe boots down with damp rag. Dry.
2. Apply a base coat of polish with a boot brush. Using a polishing cloth and small circular motions, go over the entire boot, adding more polish. Continue rubbing in using the same circular motions until the polish begins to smooth.
3. Take a spray bottle and mist the boot with water. Continue applying polish using the same cloth and technique. The boot will begin to get shiny.
4. Spray with water and buff.

Paolo Roldan is ranked among the sexiest men on models.com. PAOLO AZARRAGA/CLIENT MAGAZINE

Luxe and shimmer

London Fashion Week rolled out a hectic catwalk schedule on Monday that included Burberry and Erdem THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ERDEM FADED GOLDEN AGE GLAMOUR

Canadian designer Erdem Moralioglu's new collection is all about early 20th century glamour tinged with sadness, as if he were reflecting on screen divas trapped in old sepia photos.

As soon as guests arrive they are greeted with a dimmed stage suggesting a crumbled grand period mansion, complete with art deco lights, chandeliers, ornate columns and overturned chairs.

Models wore ankle-length slim gowns in a mostly-gloomy palette of black, navy and burgundy, adorned by myriad ruffles, shimmering brocade flowers and the intricate embroidery that the designer is famous for. A pair of unexpected, sky blue leather gloves brightened some of the outfits.

Standout looks included a gown with long gold tinsel-like tassels paired with an ivory mohair jumper, and a gunmetal grey sequined gown with matching cape.

SOPHIE SWEARS BY ERDEM

Sophie Grégoire-Trudeau wore an Erdem dress to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's swearing-in ceremony.

BURBERRY TARTAN, PATCHWORK, SEQUINS

THE CLASSIC TRENCH COAT REIMAGINED

Design wizard Christopher Bailey has once more found new ways to reimagine Burberry 's traditional strengths, transforming the trademark trench coat style into a variety of sparkly metallic looks that were anything but military in tone.

There were military coats but they were made of cashmere — trench coats, cape coats, tunics and regimental jackets, some in military blue with red piping, but the looks were feminine, not severe. The collection mixes motifs, often in one outfit: a military style tunic and cape worn over a beautifully made flapper dress that would have served well in a Chicago speakeasy.

Most impressive were some of the colourful sequined tops that shimmered with a metallic sheen on the catwalk and the patchwork skirted mini-dresses, some in floral patterns.

"The collection was really a patchwork of everything that I love," Bailey said backstage after the show.

"The idea of running through a field in wellies was in there. So it was really this mish-mash of all different worlds put together," Bailey added.

ALL PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES

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metro

NEW BOOK

Kate Hudson is Pretty Happy

As Kate Hudson establishes her own lifestyles empire with a line of athletic wear and a new book, she feels a camaraderie, not competition, with other actors who've made a similar move.

The Oscar-nominated star's new book, Pretty Happy: Healthy Ways to Love Your Body, comes after Cameron Diaz's The Body Book and Gwyneth Paltrow's weekly lifestyle publication Goop.

Then there's Jessica Alba's Honest Company and Blake Lively's now-defunct website Preserve, to name but a few.

"The truth is, most of the girls you just talked about are literally my girlfriends," Hudson, who also has her Fabletics line of sportswear, said in a recent phone interview.

"It's almost like we're like mom buddies and we get excited about talking about these things. None of them is better than the next one. We're all in it together."

Hudson said she feels "any woman's success is your success, for women."

"So when I see my friends succeed or put a positive message out there, like Jessica and like Gwyneth, it's amazing," said the 36-year-old, who has two sons.

"I'm so proud to be friends with them. To see women succeed and have that kind of success in their life should be absolutely celebrated — absolutely celebrated — in this day and age."

Kate Hudson has a line of athletic wear and now a new book outlining what she calls her 'four pillars of health'. GETTY IMAGES

Pretty Happy is structured around what Hudson calls her "four pillars of health," explaining everything from mindfulness to the benefits of an alkaline diet and Ayurvedic medicine.

Hudson said she wrote the book, in part, because she was frustrated after constantly being asked in interviews what her secrets are to looking so great and not being able to fully explain in a sound bite.

"Everybody always asks me that question: 'What do you do to balance, how do you do this and how do you do that?' and I always feel so weird talking about myself, because I'm aware and I know that that's just not going to work for everybody," said the Los Angeles native.

"Instead of it being all these magazines that I get interviewed in and I answer a question and then it gets taken out of context, I really want to put what my philosophy is out there for those who care to read it.

"And then I feel like I don't have to keep saying: 'No, that's not what I meant. No, I don't work out 2 1/2 hours a day. That's impossible. No, I don't eat only vegan.'" THE CANADIAN PRESS

JOHANNA SCHNELLER WHAT I'M WATCHING

Where the wild things are

You learn fascinating things from nature docs, like that pound for pound, a wolverine's bite force is stronger than any other land mammal. CONTRIBUTED

THE SHOW: The Nature of Things, Wolverine: Ghost of the Northern Forest (CBC)
THE MOMENT: The Carcass

In the dead of winter in northern Alberta, nature photographer Andrew Manske has been living for 21 days straight in a tiny blind, peeing into bottles to hide his scent, hoping to capture images of wolverines in the wild.

Aggressive, vicious, nocturnal, wolverines are so elusive that, when Manske finally gets a glimpse of them, he posits that his is the first footage of wild ones in North America.

He gets it by staking out the carcass of a deer killed by wolves.

Night after night, wolverines come out to snack, padding on paws as wide as snowshoes. Later, aided by a University of Alberta team who are tagging and tracking wolverines, Manske scores his greatest coup: the first images of a female wolverine with her kits.

Here's the thing about nature docs.

PHOTO FIRSTS
Nature photographer Andrew Manske scores his greatest coup: the first images of a female wolverine with her kits

Not only do you learn the stuff they want you to learn — I now know that pound for pound, a wolverine's bite force is stronger than any other land mammal — your mind is always blown by something.

And you never know what that thing will be.

With this one, it began by witnessing how many animals can live off one carcass, and for how long.

Wolverines, wolves, ravens, and lynx all chow down, with a clear hierarchy as to who eats when.

That got me thinking about animals and winter in general.

Do they sigh when it snows? Do they long for spring? Do they even have thoughts?

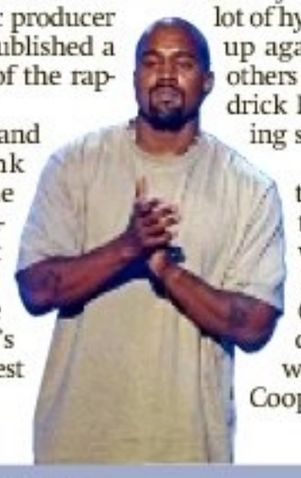
What is a thought, without words?

And, poof. Mind blown.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.

MUSIC

Kanye takes aim at Canuck producer



Kanye West is firing back at veteran Canadian music producer Bob Ezrin after he published a scathing takedown of the rapper's career.

The Juno winner, and co-producer of Pink Floyd's classic "The Wall," wrote an extensive blog post about the outspoken performer, saying that he doesn't think West's music will stand the test of time.

Ezrin says West's lyrics get a lot of hype but don't stand up against the work of others like N.W.A. or Kendrick Lamar on addressing social issues.

West responded to Ezrin on Twitter, questioning whether anyone has heard of the 66-year-old producer, who has also worked with Alice Cooper, Peter Gabriel

MUSIC BRIEFS

Cranberries singer fined

The lead singer of the Irish rock band The Cranberries has been fined $6,600 for an air-rage incident on a flight from New York to Ireland. Dolores O'Riordan avoided a criminal conviction Wednesday.

The 44-year-old had pleaded guilty in December to assaulting three policemen and a flight attendant during an alleged psychotic episode last year. She was arrested at Shannon Airport in Ireland after the flight in November 2014. Police said she spat in their faces, head-butted one and kicked the others.

Medical records given to the court indicated she was mentally ill at the time of the altercation. As she was leaving the courtroom O'Riordan urged other people suffering mental illness to seek help.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Queen of Metal tells all

MEMOIR

Lita Ford on clawing her way to the top of music world

Sue Carter
For Metro Canada

Lita Ford was only 16 years old in 1975 when she auditioned for a new act called the Runaways, described by its notorious manager Kim Fowley as "an all-girl teenage band of rebellious jailbait 'rock-and-roll bitches.'" Shortly before the audition and meeting bandmate Joan Jett for the first time, Ford had been attacked by gang members in an Arby's parking lot following an exchange of words. She showed up to perform with a blood-red eye and bruised face, and although Ford normally wasn't one to throw punches, her tough, street-fighting reputation was born.

Since then, Ford has been known as a fighter, a label she dismisses as myth. Now, after 40 years in the music business as a pioneering female guitarist, she's decided to set the record straight with Living Like a Runaway: a Memoir, published by HarperCollins. The book is a candid, at times painfully honest tour through her personal life and musical career as the "Queen of Metal."

Ford did have to fight to be taken seriously as a musician, which is one reason why the former Grammy nominee always wanted to write a book. "I started in the music industry as a young girl, not a woman. I wasn't the lead singer, I was the lead guitarist," she says. "I wanted to talk about all the hurdles I had to jump through in a man's world, to try to claw and scrape my way to the top when I just kept getting pushed down."

She spent last summer writing furiously — "I don't even think I took my robe off," Ford says — but was having no luck finding a co-writer with whom she gelled. One she describes as a chauvinist; the other, clueless about music. Then she received fan-mail from Toronto music blogger Martina Fasano. "It was the most incredible fan letter I had ever read. It really touched my heart," says Ford. The letter led to a text, then a phone call, and finally a meeting. Ford asked Fasano to help her out with a paragraph she was struggling with, which eventually led to the two collaborating on the manuscript. "She was a godsend, that little Italian rocker," says Ford.

Although sex and drugs are requisite material for rock memoirs, it's rare for women musicians to reveal as much as the lads. Ford is open about her relationships with rockers like Jon Bon Jovi, Eddie Van Halen, and Mötley Crüe's Nikki Sixx, and the copious amounts of drugs on the scene. She writes about physical abuse she allegedly experienced from her ex-fiancé, Black Sabbath guitarist Tony Iommi, and the horrific conclusion to her second marriage, which ended with Ford becoming estranged from her two sons. Now that the book is out in the world, Ford has no regrets about being so open. "I didn't leave much out," she says. "I wanted people to know my life story, and the people who were in my life that I got to be with, and hang with musically, sexually, and just as friends. I had a lot to say."

Sue Carter is the editor at Quill & Quire magazine.

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Cardiac nurses 'make the toughest moments bearable'

Vancouver man gets second chance at life

Mo Shariff, a Vancouver resident, knows what it's like to see life slipping away. He also knows what it's like to be given a second chance.

When he looks back on the six times he was hospitalized while on the waiting list for a heart transplant, it's the cardiovascular nurses that the successful transplant recipient thinks of the most.

Shariff is deeply grateful to everyone who helped him — the specialists and surgeons, of course, and the anonymous organ donor whose act of humanity gave him a second chance at life — but it was the cardiac nurses who were that day-to-day presence for Shariff and his family during those trying times.

Of his six trips to hospital, three were via the emergency department. In terms of options, Shariff was running out of them: he had already been outfitted with both a pacemaker and a ventricular assist device that helped his failing heart pump blood through his body. Yet his heart continued to deteriorate.

Shariff received his new heart in April 2015, and was released from the hospital just 10 days later. Today, he is feeling fine. In a short time, he went from thinking about making arrangements to ensure the future care of his family, to enjoying his life again with them. The ordeal is behind him and he is grateful for every day he has with his wife, Helen, and their three grown children, who are all now in their twenties. "The nurses not only helped to save my life with their tremendous expertise in cardiac health, but they helped to make some of the toughest moments bearable," says Sheriff.

It is the cardiac nurse who spends the most time with heart patients and their families, present at every step of the journey of care and keeping the patient and family connected during all stages of the cardiac care process.

Wanting to give back and help those who had helped him, Shariff and his wife recently made a significant donation to St. Paul's Foundation, which they did in honour of the cardiovascular nursing team.

Stefanie MacLeod is a clinical nurse leader at the St. Paul's Cardiac Short Stay Unit, a central hub of the Heart Centre at St. Paul's. Almost all heart patients will pass through this unit at one point or another during the course of their treatment.

"I want charitable donors to know how appreciated they are by St. Paul's staff," says MacLeod. "They inspire us to do more, to innovate, to help in other ways. People who give to St. Paul's encourage that mindset."

February is Heart Month, an appropriate occasion to join the Shariffs and many others in supporting cardiac care. To make your gift today, or share your own story about nurses at the heart of St. Paul's, visit icaretoshare.ca.

About St. Paul's Foundation:
St. Paul's Foundation raises funds for medical equipment, research, teaching and enhanced patient care at St. Paul's Hospital, which has provided care to British Columbians since 1894. Thanks to the support of donors, they have been able to purchase the latest in lifesaving technologies, attract the brightest medical minds, provide inspired care to 400,000 patients each year and develop world-leading advances in research and medical teaching that benefit many more.

How can you help?
Make a difference in the lives of patients today with a simple donation. There are many ways to give. Visit helpstpauls.com to learn more.

Mo Shariff throws the first pitch on August 18, 2015 at the Vancouver Canadians game in support of St. Paul's Strike Out Heart Disease campaign at Nat Bailey Stadium. CONTRIBUTED

Stefanie MacLeod, clinical nurse leader at the St. Paul's Cardiac Short Stay Unit, is one of many staffers who regularly assist cardiac patients throughout their hospital stay. CONTRIBUTED

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MBA GUIDE

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In our digitally interconnected world, it seems nearly anything is possible — including working towards an MBA degree in a strictly online space.

But that's nothing new for Athabasca University, based in northern Alberta. The school's online Executive MBA program was the first of its kind when it launched in 1994, and is currently the largest such program in Canada, with about 900 students.

Those students hail from across the country, from the west coast to the Greater Toronto Area, and from the Maritimes up to the territories. But wherever they're located, they're all plugged into a distinct learning environment.

"It's an incredibly engaging way to learn because you're exchanging ideas and everybody is participating," says Chris McLeod, director of marketing in the Faculty of Business at Athabasca.

"In a classroom, really, only one person can speak at a time. In our environment, we talk a lot about the democracy of the idea, and that a conversation can ebb and flow depending on who's sharing the most interesting, thought-provoking, challenging ideas."

Students complete the program over the course of two-and-a-half to three years, while continuing to work. McLeod says that provides students a unique opportunity to apply their education in real-time, hands-on ways, and bring that experience back to their peers for further discussion.

"That's one of the big advantages we have: that immediate return on investment," says McLeod. "We believe it helps people really understand what they're learning about, how to apply it to different scenarios, different sectors, different industries."

While geographical flexibility is a key selling point for many students (some of whom complete their studies while working abroad), obtaining an MBA while holding down a full-time job isn't for everyone.

"It's not the quick way to get through and try to get an MBA behind your name," says McLeod. "(Students) need to be able to work, and to really put the effort in. It's a really rigorous program."

-DANIEL SQUIZZATO

Develop your international networking

CONTRIBUTED

At the Vancouver campus of the New York Institute of Technology (NYIT), the word "globalization" is not just a hot catchphrase. It is actually a core element of the school's master of business administration (MBA) offerings, says a professor in NYIT's school of management.

"Globalization is the trend for this new century," says Dr. Frank Lorne, who taught in Asia and in other parts of North America before taking on economics courses at NYIT in 2008. "In addition to a classroom environment, we want students to develop their international networking ability among their classmates. This will be long lasting and beyond knowledge learned in classrooms, which have a global dimension also."

Lorne and other professors at NYIT, which offers a traditional MBA as well as MBA options with concentrations in finance or tourism, embrace the school's role as a global institution in several ways. For example, international guest speakers are carefully chosen to address current business trends.

"I invite industry speakers and professors in other universities to give opinions on issues here locally as well as from different parts of the world," he says. "For a global citizen culture that our university is aiming to achieve, it is only fitting to go more into that direction."

In addition, credits earned at NYIT Vancouver are interchangeable with the school's campuses in Long Island and Manhattan, Nanjing, China; and Abu Dhabi.

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NYIT

Look behind the scenes of an MBA

For the second year in a row, Simon Fraser University's Beedie School of Business will open its doors for a behind-the-scenes look at what sets its master of business administration (MBA) options apart from the rest. But don't expect a day of talking heads, says Shane Moore, director of recruitment and admissions for graduate programs.

"We want to give people a sense of what we are about and get them excited," says Moore of the free event, titled MBA 101, which takes place on March 19. "We are excited about how we teach, which includes a lot of experiential learning, so we'll ask people to think, get involved and ask questions."

Because the school offers full and part-time MBAs, a management of technology MBA, an executive MBA (EMBA) and an EMBA in Aboriginal leadership, the event will introduce attendees to all of the various options before taking them through a sample MBA class with one of Beedie's professors.

"It's a real chance to see and experience what students might encounter should they attend Beedie," says Moore of the class. "It is a great learning experience and it's going to be really interactive. No one is going to be put on the spot or removed for their comfort zone but we want people to learn while having fun."

Other highlights of MBA 101 will include a career development seminar, alumni panel and networking session that will allow attendees to speak directly to other fellow potential MBA candidates, the alumni who took part in the panel and faculty members who teach in the offerings.

"Attendees should bring with them enthusiasm, an open mind and some good questions," says Moore. "They don't need to bring resumes because we can follow up with them afterwards. We want people to feel that they are playing a part in the event and leave knowing what Beedie is all about, what the programs are about and why we are so good at what we do."

CONTRIBUTED

To learn more and register for MBA 101, which takes place on March 19 from 10 am to 3 p.m. at 500 Granville St., visit beedie.sfu.ca/MBA101.

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SFU MBA 101

MBA 101
Saturday, March 19 10am-3pm

Beedie School of Business
500 Granville Street, Vancouver

SFU **BEEDIE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS**

Flexibility key to the academic vision

CONTRIBUTED

At Thompson Rivers University (TRU), flexible learning options aren't an afterthought, they are a key foundation of its academic vision — one that the school's master of business administration (MBA) program director says is especially important when it comes to today's MBA student.

"MBA programs are ideal for students with prior work experience who are wanting to gain the skills and knowledge to advance their careers or change fields," says Victoria Martin. "However, the reality for many potential students is that they do not have the ability to commit to a full-time, on-campus program due to work or family commitments. Our flexible study options provide access to MBA studies while accommodating individual needs."

At TRU, students can take their MBA on-campus full or part-time, online or through a blended combination.

While the on-campus option provides the advantages of small class sizes and a diverse student cohort, online offers the flexibility to complete the program the from home (or anywhere with a computer and Internet connection) and access course materials whenever is convenient. The blended structure, meanwhile, involves picking up one or more MBA courses online if attending them on-campus doesn't fit into a student's schedule or lifestyle.

"An MBA program is a significant investment in your future and it is important to consider all of the options available," says Martin. "Regardless of the study method chosen, all of our MBA students study the same rigorous curriculum, must meet the same learning outcomes and receive the same degree upon successful completion of the program."

Since TRU launched its online MBA option in 2013, Martin says it has grown to become one of the school's popular options, with students responding positively to its structure and enrollment growing rapidly.

"Online studies certainly don't work for everyone. You must be self-disciplined and able to work independently," she says. "However, students in the online courses do work in virtual teams, similar to the on-campus classes, to complete projects and analyze cases. And required online discussions further encourage interaction within the course. Lectures for the online courses are pre-recorded for our students to be able to access them 24/7."

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Your essential daily news

Upside-down house is on display in Taiwan until July

MEET THE CONDO

Burnaby living for under 400K

Project overview

This THIND Properties build will give people a very unique opportunity to break into the Burnaby real estate market at an attractive entry level price. With all homes under $399,900, these condos are guaranteed to sell fast. The sales centre will open next month.

Housing amenities

Living at Pixel will include access to a fitness area and a meeting room. Residents will also have bike storage. Some homes will have large outdoor balconies, which could come in handy when hosting a dinner party!

Location and transit

Pixel is located at the corner of Gilley and Kingsway. It is centrally situated between Metrotown and Edmonds in the Deer Lake Park neighbourhood. The SkyTrain is minutes away, giving residents the option of being in downtown Vancouver in under 30 minutes.

In the neighbourhood

Pixel residents have lots to look forward to right in their own backyard. There's Metropolis at Metrotown and a plethora of restaurants and grocery stores. There's also the nearby Michael J. Fox Theatre, which plays host to a variety of performances, as well as the Nikkei National Museum and Cultural Centre.

CONTRIBUTED

NEED TO KNOW

What: Pixel
Builder: THIND Properties
Designer: Port + Quarter
Location: Burnaby
Building: Low-rise, four-storey condo
Sizes: From 600 square feet to 800 sq. ft.
Pricing: All homes under $399,900
Model: One to two bedrooms and flex
Status: Launching spring 2016
Occupancy: Fall 2017
Sales centre: 5549 Kingsway, Burnaby
Info: Pixelburnaby.com

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Planning can make or break your reno

One of the worst mistakes a homeowner can make when tackling a major renovation is to jump in sledgehammer first without a plan. Whether you're an aspiring homeowner looking to enter the housing market with a "fixer upper," or coming into the New Year looking to renovate and add function or value to your space, a renovation can be a good solution, but it can also be mess.

Dust and hard work aside, a renovation has obvious appeal as it generally brings a higher resale price. Many don't realize that planning for a renovation sometimes requires even more work than the execution itself, but if you're up for it, the end result is a bigger and better home.

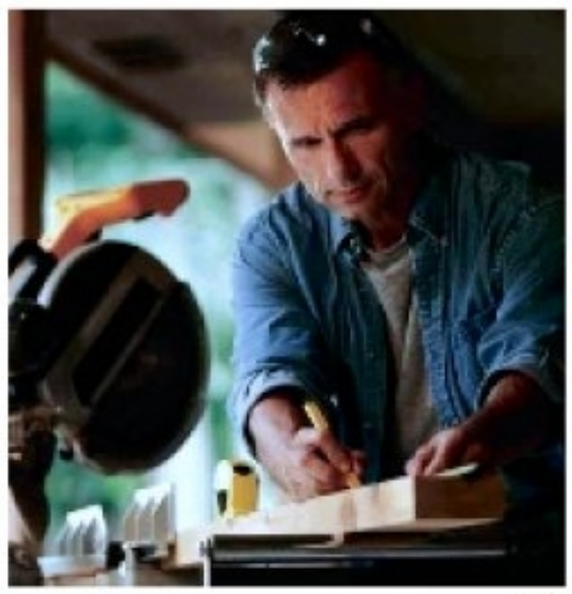
So, here's what you need to ask yourself before any renovation:

1. What is your budget?

When planning for a renovation, always be conservative. If your budget is $100,000, plan to spend $80,000. Renovations are almost always guaranteed to go over budget, as unforeseen issues pop up. Having a contingency plan from the start will get you through when you check in to see if the work is on track.

2. What is your timeline?

Knowing this in advance as well as the scope of work being done will help you determine whether you stay in your home during a renovation or go elsewhere. Living through a major renovation is never easy, but if you decide to do it, keep in mind the added



ISTOCK

cleaning at the end of the day to make the space livable again. It's always a good idea to request a payment schedule that is tied to your timeline and project milestones.

3. Have you done the required research?

In the case of renovations, there is no such thing as over-asking or over researching. It's good to have a rough idea of what materials cost in advance, as well as what is needed for a particular job. Also, don't be afraid to do your homework when it comes to picking the right contractor. Get several quotes and references and check out any sites in progress to get an idea of how they work.

4. What is my resale goal?

Ask yourself how much you're looking to increase your home's value. This will help determine how much you should be investing in order to hit the target. For owners renovating with resale in mind, investing in spaces like the kitchen, bathroom or new flooring, although more costly than minor cosmetic changes, can pay off big time when it comes time to sell. If you're not sure of how long you'll be staying, it is always safe to renovate for the future. Investing in classic, quality finishes now will keep you happy in your space and increase its value in the long run.

If you're planning a renovation, take your time and plan ahead to do it right.

- NEWS CANADA

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Modern homes with history in Killarney

CONTRIBUTED

Vancouverites looking for single-family homes are moving toward the many advantages of townhomes, according to Allan De Genova of Avalon Mews, a new townhome development in Vancouver's community-oriented Killarney neighbourhood

"Townhomes provide a flexible living space and built-in community for buyers and their families," De Genova explains. "It's the perfect lifestyle combination."

This past Saturday, Feb. 20, Avalon Mews invited the community to experience that lifestyle first-hand at its grand opening celebration. The event welcomed interested homebuyers from all over the city and by the end of the day, all but five units had offers written on them.

Located on the historic former site of Avalon Dairy at Wales and 43rd in the Killarney area of East Vancouver, Avalon Mews is a unique new development.

The six-building townhome community surrounds the original farm house residence of Avalon Dairy's founders, the Crowley family. The home is in the process of being refurbished to preserve the area's history for future generations to enjoy.

The 55 craftsman-style townhomes and garden flats at Avalon Mews elegantly weave modern style into the location's historic legacy.

The contemporary simplicity of the homes starts with the colour scheme: buyers will have their choice of two professionally designed palettes.

Kitchens were designed with real families in mind. The sleek fixtures and finishes, like designer appliances and solid countertops, are equally beautiful and practical.

The bathrooms and their luxurious finishes provide residents with the opportunity to truly relax.

Lock-off units available in some homes provide a separate direct-access suite, ideal for a number of different purposes and life phases. The lock-off suites can be rented for income as a mortgage helper, or can serve as a home for a family member, allowing family to live together yet enjoy their own private space.

The homes are far more than the carefully considered design and finishings inside their walls. They extend into the community with shared garden plots, an area for barbecuing and expansive green spaces — a great way to meet your neighbours and get outside.

Residents will have a neighbourhood full of amenities at their fingertips, including nine elementary and secondary schools, more than 400 stores and activities in close range and five parks within a five block radius.

You can find more information at www.avalonmews.ca, or call 604-438-5050.

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West Coast style appeals to residents

When you're looking for a new home, find a place with a ready-made community that already has deep roots, says Vanessa Isler, director of sales and marketing for Street-Side Developments, the developer of Maple Heights, a community-oriented townhome community located at 240th Street and Kanaka Way in Maple Ridge.

Maple Heights is Maple Ridge's most popular townhome community, and it is drawing buyers from every demographic, especially from the North Shore and Coquitlam.

"Locals are drawn to Maple Heights," says Isler. "They recognize the value of buying now in the Maple Ridge area, and they also recognize standout homes when they see them."

Phase 4 of the development was released in January, and thanks to brisk sales there are only a few homes left in that release. Two- and three-storey, three-bedroom homes start in the $380,000s, including net GST. The release of phase 5 is close on the horizon.

This green, affordable community is an ideal option for growing families. Nearby Kanaka Creek is waiting to be explored with its picturesque waterfalls and salmon hatchery.

There are also lots of amenities to take advantage of in the neighbourhood. Restaurants, schools and shopping are close by, and the West Coast Express train to downtown Vancouver is only five minutes away.

"Maple Heights is a smart investment and a wonderful place to live," Isler says.

Kids will enjoy the verdant, winding pathways within the development. Take a walk along the timber boardwalks and discover the natural habitats, swing benches and play structures, and a mountain-themed park.

The homes are designed in West Coast style using an earthy colour palette, with feature roofs, stone accents, and warm wood detailing. Families will enjoy the professionally landscaped yards in the front or rear of every home, as well as the generous decks and patios.

CONTRIBUTED

Interiors are designed with fine modern finishings, including shaker-style or flat-panel cabinetry, thick quartz countertops, and stainless steel, energy efficient appliances.

The sales centre and display homes are open from 12-5 daily at 11305 240th Street, Maple Ridge. Call 604.380.1215 or visit mapleheights.ca.

Brentwood offers world-class living

At The Amazing Brentwood, the community and location is just as impressive as the homes themselves.

"We're introducing one of the largest master-planned communities in North America here in North Burnaby," says Dan Wilson, executive vice-president of Shape Living, the developer behind The Amazing Brentwood. "Every detail is designed to provide residents and visitors with a world-class shopping, dining and living experience full of rich architectural landscapes and a vibrant social scene."

Brentwood Mall has been a longtime hub for North Burnaby, in its regional location directly connected to SkyTrain and proximity to Highway 1 for easy access to Whistler and all of Metro Vancouver. The existing shopping centre is now undergoing a major metamorphosis into a 1.1 million square-foot super regional urban centre.

The $1.3 billion project is set to complete its first phase in 2018 and will welcome more than 250 shops and restaurants carefully chosen to include global brands and local, one-of-a-kind retailers. Construction is now fully underway.

"The Amazing Brentwood is taking neighbourhood landmark Brentwood Mall and realizing its potential," says Wilson. "It's transforming into a fully master-planned regional destination."

The day-night, indoor-outdoor city centre will include a one-acre central event plaza designed to host year-round events such as musical performances and farmers markets. Shoppers can drive up or walk to their favourite shops on Brentwood Boulevard, the centre's fashion high street, or visit the large collection of fashion retailers inside the newly renovated enclosed shopping centre. Meet friends and family for a bite in one of the many curated restaurant offerings, from casual eateries to fine dining.

Brentwood THREE, the latest residential offering at The Amazing Brentwood, soars 54 storeys high with 526 new homes, and provides everything above and more. It includes private resident-only spaces such as the state-of-the-art fitness centre, complete with cardio equipment, weight-training facilities, a yoga studio and a meditation space. Other private amenity spaces include access to nearly 18,000 sq. ft. of private outdoor space with a children's play area, gardens and courtyards, as well as 8,400 sq. ft. of indoor space complete with social lounges, chef's kitchen and dining room, music room and two guest suites.

The Amazing Brentwood CONTRIBUTED

The homes at The Amazing Brentwood THREE start at $473,800 for a 722 square-foot two-bedroom with 103 square feet of outdoor space.

Visitors are welcome at the 15,000-square-foot Presentation Centre, located at 4567 Lougheed Highway (Brentwood Mall). Open daily noon to 5 p.m., theamazingbrentwood.com, 604-563-8386.

Amazing views can be yours

The Amazing Brentwood is a collection of homes that wow.

The response to this new master-planned community now under development in family-oriented North Burnaby has been overwhelmingly positive.

The latest residential offering, Brentwood THREE, is now more than 80 per cent sold, with a wide selection of 90 desirable homes available.

"The response we've seen to the release of Brentwood THREE homes has been truly amazing," says Dan Wilson, executive vice-president of Shape Living, the developer behind The Amazing Brentwood. "With Brentwood ONE and TWO sold out, homebuyers are fully realizing the success of the entire project and want to be part of it. They see the value of the location, the quality of the homes and the long-term opportunity of this master-planned community. The Amazing Brentwood will only continue to build momentum as the community grows."

Beautiful, innovative and functional, the one-, two- and three-bedroom residences at Brentwood THREE come with high-end finished interiors and thoughtful details — a home you'll love for years to come.

The Amazing Brentwood THREE CONTRIBUTED

1.1M sq. ft of shopping, dining and entertainment.

Shape Living kitchen shown in Contemporary White.

Over 25,000 sq. ft. of private indoor and outdoor amenity space.

That enduring style comes standard. The homes feature high-quality details like polished stone countertops, European cabinetry with soft-close hardware and high-end Bosch European appliances, including a refrigerator and dishwasher integrated behind the sleek cabinetry, giving the kitchen a seamless look.

Every home was designed to anticipate your organizational needs, providing smart solutions to save space. Let your counters breathe and store your kitchen appliances and ingredients neatly in the floor-to-ceiling cabinets, which offer up to 40 per cent more storage space.

The kitchen island and breakfast bar, offered in every home, are an elegant place at the centre of your home to enjoy an espresso and your newspaper on a Saturday morning.

While you're there, enjoy the view. The panorama from your windows will rival the vistas from anywhere in Vancouver, with views over the North Shore Mountains and Burrard Inlet, the Fraser River and the dazzling cityscape.

The Amazing Brentwood will be an amazing place to call home.

NO NEED FOR A CAR AT BRENTWOOD

You couldn't find a more centrally located place to live than Brentwood THREE for excellent access to all of Metro Vancouver.

Start your journey at Brentwood SkyTrain Station, directly connected to The Amazing Brentwood and only an elevator ride away. Many consider this station to be the most inviting and architecturally adventurous in the Lower Mainland's public transit system.

From there, you'll be able to reach downtown Vancouver in less than 20 minutes — faster than it takes to drive that distance. On the train, you'll race past car traffic, especially during peak travel hours.

Residents at Brentwood THREE will have easy access to the Commercial Drive-Broadway shopping district, just seven minutes away by train, and the new Evergreen Line will be accessible 10 minutes away.

If you're en route to a flight, save your taxi fare and take the train. It'll get you to Vancouver International Airport in 48 minutes.

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Discover your reason to check out Sapperton

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If you've never heard of Sapperton, you will soon. It's a cool, little neighbourhood in New Westminster that's in the midst of a major transformation. Located on the slope above the Fraser River and centered around Brunette Avenue and Columbia Street, Sapperton offers views of the working river with tug boats and log booms. It's gritty, busy and beautiful.

It used to be home to Labatt's Brewery, but now, on the site, there's a new master-planned community called Brewery District taking shape, featuring a vibrant retail village that includes Browns Socialhouse, Starbucks, Save-On-Foods, Move Yoga Studio and many other small businesses and offices. Royal Columbia Hospital is right there. So is Translink headquarters.

And it's steps from the Sapperton Skytrain station — a 30-minute ride to downtown Vancouver.

Now, the first new residential development in the neighbourhood is under construction. The Sapperton will be a new 15-storey, 114 home condo tower that will offer the best value anywhere on transit and great amenities — all in the heart of a burgeoning, new neighbourhood. Here are a few reasons why you should check it out:

1. The area has a rich history with beautiful old buildings, lots of parks and a strong community.

2. Young, hip people are moving in. Not just because it's more affordable than Vancouver, but also because it's full of character, artist and yoga studios, indie cafes, antique stores, cool new restaurants and cafes.

3. The real estate is still undervalued. There's easy access to the Skytrain and no toll bridges to drive to downtown Vancouver. It's one of the few suburbs where you don't really need a car. You can walk, bike or Skytrain everywhere.

4. The province recently committed to a $1.25 billion investment at Royal Columbian Hospital, which means Sapperton is likely to become a destination for medical research and with that an influx of doctors and other health care professionals.

5. Sapperton is close to the revitalized downtown New West with its growing number of art studios and galleries, a new civic centre, riverfront walkway that's replacing the old crumbling industrial warehouses and the River Market which boasts great outdoor patios, restaurants and shops.

Wesgroup's The Sapperton homes are now selling. For more details, check out www.thebrewerydistrict.ca

CONTRIBUTED

AMENITIES DRAW BUYERS

One of the many reasons people choose to buy a condo is access to the amenities in or nearby the building. This is particularly true for the city's new buildings where amenities like squash courts, fitness rooms and communal rooftop decks lure buyers to the club-like condo lifestyle.

At Wesgroup's new development in New Westminster, there will be 10,000 square feet of premium and private indoor fitness amenities, as well as an additional 10,000 square feet of outdoor amenities. The Sapperton is a new 15-storey, 114 home condo tower that boasts what it's calling Club Central — a massive, modern and epic amenity facility for residents. The indoor amenities are so big, they're spread onto two floors featuring a state-of-the-art gym and weights, sauna and steam room, treatment room, squash court, yoga and dance studios. And to cater to residents' social needs, there's a whole other floor featuring meeting rooms, a large indoor lounge and kitchen for hosting and entertaining.

Outside, there is the 1,000 square feet of exclusive rooftop amenities featuring two separate lounges, a covered BBQ and cooking area and outdoor fire pit and the views will be amazing. Located on the slope above the Fraser River, The Sapperton offers views of the working river with tug boats, log booms, bird life and sunsets.

Most of the outdoor area (9,450 square feet of it) will be a podium park, featuring grassy lawns, picnic spots and a playground.

Outside of the building itself, the burgeoning Sapperton neighbourhood, known as Brewery District, includes a vibrant retail village that is home to Browns Socialhouse, Starbucks, Save-On-Foods, Move Yoga Studio and many other small businesses and offices. Royal Columbia Hospital is right there. So is the Sapperton Skytrain station — a 30-minute ride to downtown Vancouver. What residents say they most love about the area is that they don't need a car to get groceries or access services. Unlike most suburbs, you can walk, bike or Skytrain everywhere.

Visit www.thebrewerydistrict.ca for more information.

— The —

Sapperton

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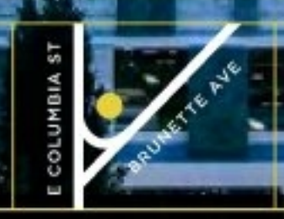

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WESGROUP

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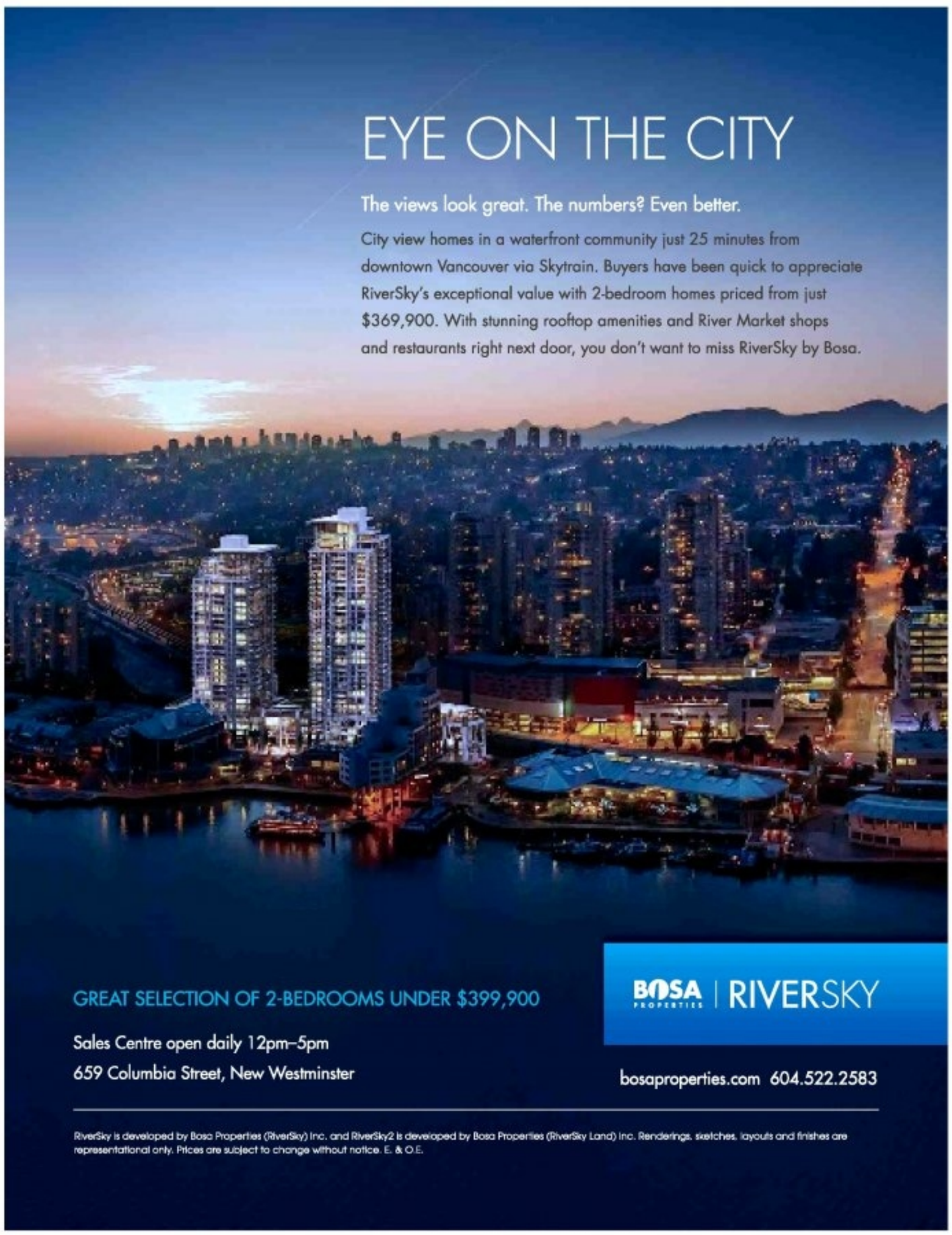

City living at the riverfront

There are many regions in Vancouver where one can invest in a home, but New Westminster stands out — and RiverSky is one of its best opportunities.

This is an exciting time to be in New Westminster, explains Judy Graham, sales manager of RiverSky, a new riverfront community by Bosa Properties.

"We've already sold more than 30 homes at RiverSky since the beginning of 2016," Graham says, pointing out that the RiverSky community was one of the fastest-selling communities of 2015. "People are continuing to see how much New Westminster, and our amazing riverfront location, have to offer."

The city is a historically rich place that places value on its heritage, yet it's thoroughly modern too. The City of New Westminster is currently renovating Front Street, one of its most history-packed areas, to preserve the city's culture and architecture, as well as investing in other urban development and renewal projects to build the city's future.

The recently built Anvil Centre, for instance, is a state-of-the-art community and convention centre in the heart of downtown that offers access to office, music, art and workshop space for the whole community.

RiverSky is ideally placed to take advantage of everything the city has to offer. Within a five-minute walk of New Westminster's historic downtown, homebuyers will have access to everything they need.

The development is also located adjacent to the city's River Market, a vibrant hub of shops, restaurants and entertainment on the riverfront. Get your organic groceries at Donald's Market, browse beautifully restored vintage home furnishings at Mid-Century Modern Home, or grab some of the best Thai food in the Lower Mainland at Longtail Kitchen.

Indoors at RiverSky, every home is an oasis. The finishes and fixtures marry convenience and luxury, including quartz countertops, undermount sinks, and integrated and stainless steel appliances.

A great selection of two- and three-bedroom homes are still available at great value, with many two-bedrooms under $399,900. Visit the presentation centre for more information and a first-hand look at the homes' sleek design, and the rich neighbourhood amenities.

The presentation centre is at 659 Columbia St., New Westminster, open daily from 12-5 p.m. Call 604-522-2583, or visit bosaproperties.com.

MAINTAIN YOUR HOME ALARMS

ISTOCK

Every March, we're urged to change the batteries in our smoke and carbon monoxide alarms when we move our clocks ahead to Daylight Saving Time. Since we depend on them for early warning of fire, and exposure to this deadly and invisible gas, it's important that every alarm is working properly at all times.

But there is one more step you should take to ensure that your family is truly protected: Check the age of your alarms and replace any that are outdated.

"Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms stand guard 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and are subjected to all sorts of dust, grime and cooking smoke," says Carol Heller of Kidde Canada, the country's leading home fire safety company. "So it makes sense that eventually they need to be replaced."

But how often? North American fire safety organizations say that smoke alarms should be replaced every 10 years and carbon monoxide alarms every seven to 10 years, depending on the brand. This is true whether alarms are battery powered, plug-in or hard wired.

Experts stress that checking the age of the alarms before you install fresh batteries is essential, because you don't want to put new batteries into outdated alarms.

Consider these additional safety reminders:

1. Never take down a smoke alarm or remove its batteries because of a nuisance alarm caused by cooking. Instead, install a photoelectric smoke alarm near the kitchen area as it may help reduce false alarms.

2. If you have a gas furnace or water heater, gas appliances, a wood or gas fireplace, or an attached garage or carport you should install at least one carbon monoxide alarm. (In some provinces and municipalities this is the law.) Install outside bedrooms so they can waken sleeping family members. Never install a CO alarm in a furnace room.

3. CO alarms with continuous digital displays are very popular, as they show if low levels of the gas are present. This way you can determine what the problem is and correct it, before harmful levels can be reached.

4. The latest generation alarms, called "Worry-Free," feature a sealed battery that lasts 10 years from installation and never needs to be replaced.

- NEWS CANADA

Rent in a colourful cultural hub

CONTRIBUTED

Vancouver's Chinatown is one of the city's most treasured historical areas, and is fast growing into one of its hippest places to live.

Now you can rent there in a beautifully appointed new home at BlueSky Chinatown. Located in the heart of Chinatown at 183 East Georgia St. at Main Street, BlueSky Chinatown delivers residents the full lifestyle package, at an affordable price.

The building's studio, one-bedroom and two-bedroom homes are available now and start at $1,195 per month, and feature new, quality finishes — plus incredible views.

Every home includes an exceptional package of amenities unique to BlueSky Chinatown, exclusive to residents. Shared spaces for residents including the outdoor lounge, theatre and fireplace, and indoors, the entertaining kitchen and dining room create a true sense of community within the building.

Don't bother renewing your gym membership. You'll have a 1,500 square foot fitness centre in the building, ready to access at any time. When you'd prefer to go out on your bike, the building has bikes available to borrow, bike storage if you have your own, and a bike repair room.

Pets are welcome — BlueSky even offers a dedicated Laundromutt™ Pet Washing Station, for those muddy puppy play dates in the park.

Shopping in the historical neighbourhood couldn't be more colourful, or more convenient. Find food, clothing and homewares in the many boutiques lining Main, Keefer, Pender and East Georgia streets.

Supermarket shopping is also close at hand at T&T Supermarket and Nesters Food Market, both within walking distance.

The area is a great mix of city culture and parks. Andy Livingstone Park and Portside Park are within walking distance.

Or visit the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden. In 2011, National Geographic named the park the best city garden in the world. There's always something going on there, from traditional calligraphy to cooking demonstrations, and the garden is exquisite at every time of year.

Perhaps best of all, BlueSky Chinatown helps its renters save up to buy. Your landlord puts aside 15 per cent of your monthly rent into your BosaEQUITY™ account. The credit can then be used toward the future purchase of a Bosa home.

Rental Centre open daily from noon to 6 p.m., 604-897-3333, bosa4rent.com/Chinatown

Metrotown: The friendly city centre

There's a reason why Burnaby has been chosen as Canada's best-run city. The city's scenic parks, smart city planning, great social services, lively city hubs and vibrant cultural mix have put the city on the map.

The city's largest hub, Metrotown, draws newcomers and locals alike. The area is a convenient shopping complex, recreational area and centre of commerce all rolled into one — providing the community with a place to congregate for every activity imaginable, from coffee with friends at one of Metrotown's many cafés to tai chi at Bonsor Recreation Centre.

Villo Metrotown, an up-and-coming new development by third-generation real estate developer Bucci Developments, will unveil its sales centre this May, introducing a top-quality selection of homes to the Metrotown neighbourhood. The project is already under construction, and will be ready for possession in early fall of 2016.

The 45 townhomes come in one, two and three-and-a-half levels, and will be located at 7039 Macpherson Ave., in Burnaby.

The development's two- and three-bedroom homes are designed for couples and families looking for a place to live that's affordable, beautiful and accessible to all the amenities they want and need. The project will feature a central courtyard, mature landscaping, and generous floor plans with plenty of private outdoor living space.

The activity options are endless in the neighbourhood. For all your day-to-day and special occasion shopping needs, Metropolis at Metrotown, the largest shopping mall in B.C., is just a two-minute SkyTrain ride away, with more than 450 stores.

The mall's big brands, including Michael Kors and Nike, carry the latest fashion and accessories. Multiple supermarkets, including the Real Canadian Superstore and T&T Supermarket, will be at your fingertips too.

For entertainment, you'll always find the latest blockbusters at SilverCity Metropolis, right in the mall.

CONTRIBUTED

Green space is plentiful nearby too, including Burnaby's crown jewel, Central Park.

Minutes away from Royal Oak SkyTrain Station, Villo Metrotown is the perfect location to access the rest of the city. From there it takes just two minutes to get to Metrotown, and less than 20 to downtown Vancouver.

More information on Villo Metrotown is coming soon. Register online for the latest insider updates at bucci.com/villo.

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metro SPORTS

Denver coach Gary Kubiak says he's been in contact with Peyton Manning but isn't pressuring him for a decision about his future

The curious case of the Blue Jays centre-fielder

MLB

Pillar strives to be like a baby in his training regimen

Kevin Pillar didn't like the way his body was moving through workouts when he first reported to the Toronto Blue Jays camp last month.

So he changed his whole routine with one goal in mind — be more like a baby.

"It kind of sounds weird unless you see it happen, but my focus is really to try to move like an infant child," the Toronto centre-fielder said before Wednesday morning workouts at Florida Auto Exchange Stadium.

"They do a lot of things right: they know how to properly roll over, they don't allow their big muscles to dominate their bodies."

Pillar's new routine, which emphasizes flexibility and mobility through rolling and stretching, is aimed at targeting the body's smaller muscles. The results are already beginning to show.

"The big thing I've noticed is I wake up in the morning and I feel better," he said. "I'm not as sore as I used to be."

Pillar, who played 159 games last season, estimated he felt "below average" physically for about half of them.

Part of that had to do with the way he plays in the outfield — with reckless abandon.

He runs at top speed to track balls, dives through the air to catch them and lands hard on the artificial turf-covered concrete of the Rogers Centre.

The highlight-reel catches that punctuated Pillar's 2015 season may not be as prevalent this year.

"I'll be less sore, I'll recover a little bit quicker. Those are my main focuses."
Kevin Pillar

"With improved mobility and quickness, hopefully I don't have to dive as much," he said. "But when I do dive, hopefully I'll be able to bounce back quicker than I did last year.

"It'll be easier to get up from. I'll be less sore, I'll recover a little bit quicker. Those are my main focuses."

While position players don't have to officially report until Thursday, Pillar has been here since Jan. 20 — three days after purchasing and moving into his first home with his wife, Amanda, in Thousand Oaks, Calif.

Pillar, second baseman Ryan Goins and first baseman Chris Colabello have all been working out together at the Jays facility along with all-star slugger Jose Bautista.

"The off-season is fun to get away but, after a while, you miss that camaraderie," Pillar said. "We really just want to build on what we started last year. It's fun to see your friends and family at home and get away from the game but you miss that aspect of competition and brotherhood and friendship.

"For guys like me, Goins and Colabello, last season was really our first full season and we just want to push each other to be better this year."

Pillar, who had to battle for a starting outfield job last spring, finished the season with a .278 batting average, 12 home runs and 56 RBIs. But he cemented himself as the team's centre-fielder with his strong defence.

Now that he's virtually assured a spot on the big-league roster, Pillar's focus has changed.

"As much as I want to say it won't change, I think it does a little bit," he said. "I've never been in a position where I've had job security so I don't like to look at it like that. But at the same time I understand where I stand with the team now.

"I'm still going to go out and compete but in the back of my mind I understand that I'm playing for something bigger than a job. I'm playing for the whole regular season and to help the team win."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

PHOTO: CARLOS OSORIO/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

WORLD CUP QUALIFYING

'Sea of Red' grows

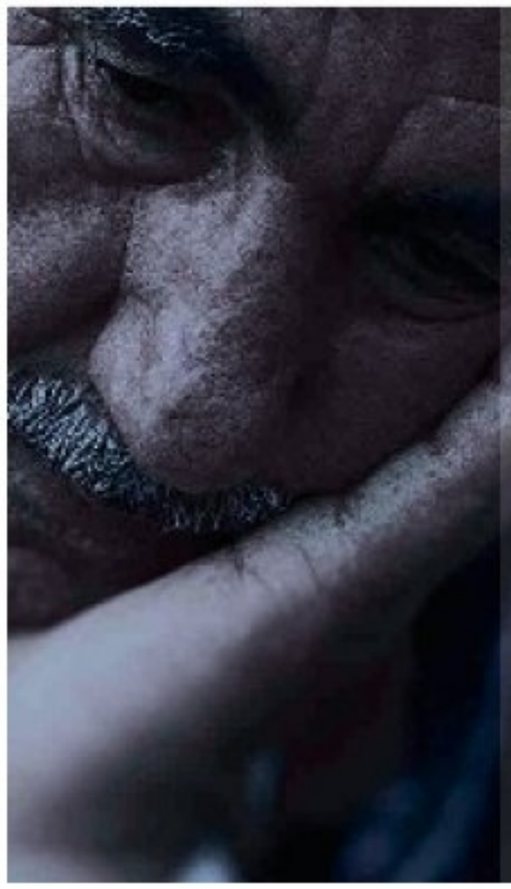
With a crucial home-and-home set of FIFA World Cup qualifiers next month versus Mexico, Canada Soccer announced Wednesday that so far 35,000 tickets have been sold for the March 25 match at BC Place Stadium in Vancouver.

That represents a substantial increase in the size of the smaller but boisterous crowd of 20,108 from November's qualifier — a 1-0 win over Honduras — in Vancouver, and the upcoming contest versus Mexico is still a month out.

"We want to see a sea of red at BC Place," said Canadian coach Benito Floro in a statement. "What happened in Vancouver in November was marvellous and unforgettable, so we can't wait for more of the same in March."

Now into the fourth round of the qualifying competition, Canada enters this set of games sitting second in CONCACAF Group 1 with one win, one draw and four points. Mexico leads the group with six points.

Following the game in Vancouver, Canada and Mexico face each other again on March 29 in Mexico. CAM TUCKER/METRO



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CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Dynamite City carve up Dynamo in Kyiv

Sergio Aguero scored one goal and helped create another as Manchester City powered to a 3-1 first-leg win over Dynamo Kyiv in the last 16 of the Champions League on Wednesday.

Aguero and David Silva's goals gave City a 2-0 cushion at the break before Vitaliy Buyalskiy pulled one back for Dynamo and Yaya Toure secured a valuable third away goal for City.

Aguero has now scored eight goals in City's last nine games and 16 in his last 17 Champions League starts. The Argentine also helped to set up City's second, feeding Raheem Sterling with a backheel on the edge of the box. Sterling then crossed low for Silva to score at the far post just before halftime. "It is not finished but playing away and having a two-goal lead is very good," City coach Manuel Pellegrini said. "When it was 2-1 we had moments of doubt, but then we got the third goal."

City's David Silva puts his side up 2-0 on Wednesday in Kyiv. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

In Wednesday's other game, 10-man PSV Eindhoven held on for a 0-0 draw with Atletico Madrid. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Canucks acquire Larsen

The Vancouver Canucks made a trade Wednesday, acquiring the rights to defenceman Philip Larsen from the Edmonton Oilers in exchange for a conditional fifth-round pick in 2017.

Larsen, 26, is currently playing in the KHL with Jokerit Helsinki and hasn't played in North America since the 2013-14 season when he spent 30 games with the Oilers, recording three goals and 12 points. CAM TUCKER/METRO

Alberta loses but still top of table at curling nationals

Teams jockeyed for playoff positions at the Canadian women's curling championship Wednesday as the preliminary round's finish line loomed.

The top four teams at the conclusion of the round robin Friday morning advance to the Page playoff. Alberta's Chelsea Carey stayed atop the standings at 7-2 despite an 11-7 loss to Manitoba's Kerri Einarson in the afternoon draw. THE CANADIAN PRESS

McGregor, Diaz get lippy ahead of bout

UFC 196

Promotion for hastily lined up fight turns into trash-talk war

Conor McGregor has turned fight promotion into an art during his ferocious rise to the top of the UFC. In Nate Diaz, McGregor has an opponent with an abrasive personality to match his own — and brawling tendencies to turn their UFC 196 showdown into something worth talking about.

When the UFC put two of its most prodigious trash-talkers on a podium Wednesday to discuss their hastily arranged bout, the resulting display of verbal fireworks didn't disappoint the hundreds of fans who waited in a line stretching around a gym in suburban Los Angeles.

"With his soft body and his lack of preparation, he will not be able to handle the ferocity," McGregor said. "By the end of the first (round), I feel he will be put away. There's a respect there between us, but it's business in there, and he will be KO'd inside the first round."

Even with less than two weeks to promote their March 5 bout in Las Vegas, McGregor's promotional sparring with Diaz might make the new main event bigger than McGregor's original matchup with lightweight champion Rafael Dos Anjos, who pulled out Tuesday with a foot injury.

Conor McGregor, left, and Nate Diaz, right, after a news conference on Wednesday. KEVORK DJANSEZIAN/GETTY IMAGES

"(Not getting to fight for) the belt stung for a little bit, the fact I wouldn't," McGregor said. "But really it doesn't matter what weight divisions or what belt is on the line, because I should create my own belt, because I am my own belt. It's the McGregor belt."

> **With his soft body and his lack of preparation, he will not be able to handle the ferocity.**
> Conor McGregor

While Dos Anjos has few fans outside his native Brazil, Diaz is a popular veteran from a California fighting family. Diaz also embraces the antagonistic nature of promoting a fight with the boastful McGregor (192), who has joined Ronda Rousey as one of the UFC's biggest stars.

"I'm just going to kill or be killed," Diaz said. "That's what I'm coming with."

Even Diaz (18-10) seemed a bit overwhelmed by McGregor's verbal gymnastics in their first joint appearance, mostly keeping his comments short after infuriating the champ by repeatedly asserting McGregor is using steroids. McGregor then asserted Diaz is an unskilled brawler and made fun of the bout's 170-pound weight limit requested by Diaz. McGregor won the 145-pound belt in December, and he has been training for a 155-pound fight with Dos Anjos.

"The only weight I care about is the weight of them checks, and my checks are always super heavyweight," McGregor said.

McGregor is the UFC's featherweight champion, and the loquacious Irishman had hoped to win the lightweight belt simultaneously at the MGM Grand Garden Arena before Dos Anjos pulled out, predictably drawing the champion's scorn.

"Did you see (the injury)? It's a bruise!" McGregor said. "Ice! Ibuprofen! If I jumped under an X-ray (with that injury), the doctor would slap me and say, 'What are you doing, kid? Get out of here!'" McGregor also took time to rip the other candidates for the fight, criticizing former champion Frankie Edgar and former lightweight champion Jose Aldo, who was knocked out in 13 seconds by McGregor in December.

"At least Nate was engaging in the conversation," McGregor said, even while criticizing Diaz for asking for a higher weight limit. "Everybody else went flat-out running." Diaz and his older brother, Nick, a former Strikeforce welterweight champion, have earned several high-profile fights in recent years for their combination of fighting skills and outlaw personae. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

Don't be fooled by the simplicity of this pasta recipe, it delivers incredibly deep and complex flavours out of the tiny time it demands of you. Which may explain our addiction to it.

Ready in
Prep time: 5 minutes
Total time: 20 minutes
Serves 4

Ingredients
- 500 g penne pasta
- 4 cups baby spinach or arugula
- 1/4 cup sundried tomatoes, diced (not packed in oil)
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 large clove garlic
- 1 tsp umami paste
- 1/2 cup shaved Asiago cheese, plus 1 Tbsp
- 1 handful of basil leaves (about 20), thinly sliced

Directions

1. Prepare pasta according to package directions in well-salted water. During the last minute of cooking time, drop the spinach and sundried tomatoes into the water. Reserve 1 cup of cooking water then drain pasta.

2. Pour drained pasta and vegetables back into pot and mix in olive oil. Using a microplane, grate garlic into the pasta, add in the umami paste, cheese, and stir. Loosen up your sauce by adding a tablespoon of reserved pasta water at a time until you reach desired consistency.

3. Serve with basil and Asiago sprinkled on top.

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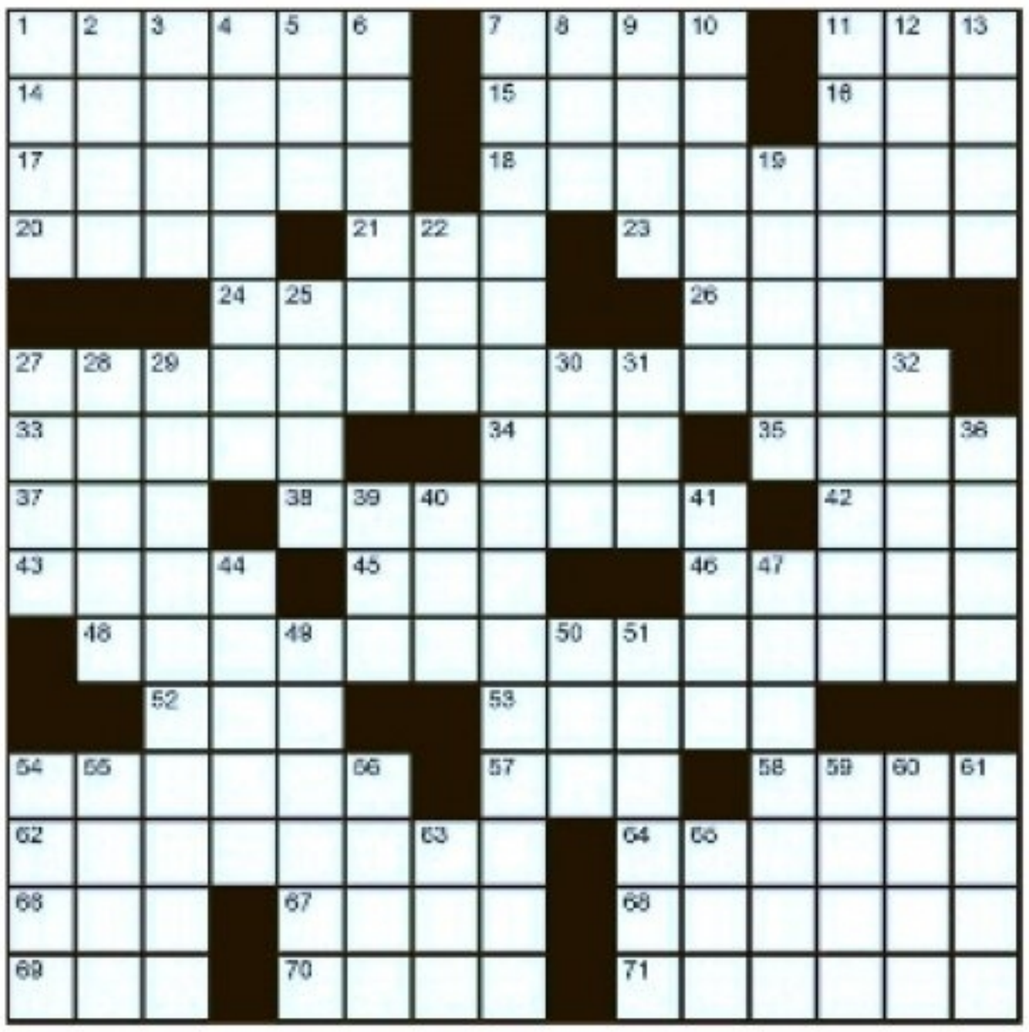
CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Apartment lease signer
7. Bewildered stare
11. Isthmus of __ (Malay Peninsula part)
14. "Fancy" rapper Iggy
15. "Is that station on FM ___?" ...wondered the radio listener
16. "Well, __ really."
17. Hat type
18. Bernie Taupin on an Elton John classic
20. Wrapped garment
21. Psychedelic drug
23. B.C.'s __ Valley
24. Smoulder
26. "Ugh!"
27. Creative trends for adults in the world of publishing now: 2 wds.
33. Contracted 'are not'
34. Cute laugh, when doubled
35. Bother/irritate ...in a typo
37. Idled
38. Canadian band with the 1982 hit "Your Daddy Don't Know"
42. Favourer's vote
43. Hgts.
45. "__ darn tootin'!"
46. Mil. rank: 2 wds.
48. It made headlines in the world of rock in 1970: 2 wds.
52. Time off letters
53. Set of values
54. Mr. Kutcher
57. "Wellll...?"
58. Phone nos.
62. Rather embarrassed
64. Cat who hosts #32-Down
66. Ms. Carrere
67. __-1, "Ghostbusters" (1984) vehicle
68. American inventor Thomas
69. Party-less politician, puny-ly
70. District
71. Lucifer's

DOWN
1. On-people pix
2. Canadian pundit Mr. Levant
3. Reshmi __, CBC journalist
4. Sackville, N.B.'s Mount __ University
5. Omaha's li'l state
6. "Tell It to My Heart" singer Ms. Dayne
7. Populated region around western Lake Ontario as it's known: 2 wds.
8. 'Legend' suffix
9. Golfer's norms
10. Mr. Estevez
11. Bookshelf trinket
12. Santa __, California
13. Office memo abbr.
19. Wintertime drink by the fire
22. Go downhill
25. Producer/songwriter Mr. Lange
27. House: Spanish
28. Teeth care brand
29. Company's stationery
30. Basic category [abbr.]
31. Wager
32. 'SY' of SYTYCD: 2 wds.
36. Kennel cry
39. Olive of cartoons
40. Celebrity chef Ms. Drummond
41. Margarine
44. Health: French
47. Try that food sample: 2 wds.
49. Saint-__ (South of France resort)
50. Randy Bachman's '70s gr.
51. __ Scholar
54. __ Spumante wine
55. Knee-to-ankle midpoint
56. Album of 1967: 'The Velvet Underground & __'
59. Queen in "Frozen" (2013)
60. Mr. Trotsky
61. Thesaurus entries, for short
63. RR depot
65. Writer Ms. LeShan

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
Progress arrives through taking chances and rejecting traditional ways of doing things. The more others try to persuade that now is not the time to try something new, the more confident you should be.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Today you will demand to have your say. Others will be so shocked they might actually listen for a change. If not, don't be afraid to shout!

Gemini May 22 - June 21
Be aware of others' doubts but don't let them influence you too much. Have confidence in yourself, with your ruler Mercury in one of the better areas of your chart you won't lack for self-belief.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
For the next 24 hours, others may not be telling you the truth. It does not matter how good a deal you're being offered, if there is the slightest doubt in your mind you must turn it down.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Don't be too hard on people whose beliefs are different from your own. They are as entitled to their way of thinking, so be tolerant. If that's not possible, just stay out of their way.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You may not take kindly to outsiders telling you how to do things but perhaps on this occasion you should listen. If they are all saying much the same thing it may be a sign that they are on to something. Think about it.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Mercury in Aquarius is still doing wonders for your confidence. Today, go out of your way to show the world what you can do. Don't let anyone tell you that you are aiming too high.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
This is an emotional time for you. Be careful not to let little, everyday things get you down. Strive to see the good in your life and in everyone you know. It's still there — it just takes a bit more effort to recognize.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Usually you like to hear both sides of every story but today you will come down strongly in favour of one particular viewpoint. Don't beat about the bush — say your piece.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You are under no obligation to be nice to someone but realize that they may be useful to you in the near future, so try to stay on good terms.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Anything is possible today but that's not an invitation to ignore common sense and take on a task that is clearly not worth the time and energy that will be required to make it work. Be selective in your enthusiasms.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
Don't give away too much information. Play your cards close to your chest and keep those you work with guessing what your next move might be. The less they know the bigger your personal advantage will be.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

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7	1	9	5	4	6	2	8	3
9	4	5	6	3	2	7	1	8
2	3	1	8	7	4	9	5	6
6	7	8	1	9	5	3	2	4
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8	5	7	4	6	9	1	3	2
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